IN THE U.S. PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re application of:

Olivier MATILE

Appl. No.:

February 20, 2002 Examiner: Kastles

Filed:

For:

LASER CUTTING METHOD AND APPARATUS WITH A

BIFOCAL OPTICAL MEANS AND A HYDROGEN-BASED

ASSIST GAS

PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT

Assistant Commissioner for Patents Washington, DC 20231

February 20, 2002

Sir:

The following preliminary amendments and remarks are respectfully submitted in connection with the above-identified application.

IN THE ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE:

Please replace the Abstract of the Disclosure with the rewritten Abstract of the Disclosure attached on a separate sheet attached hereto.

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend the claims as follows:

3. (Amended) Method according to claim 1, characterized in that the workpiece to be cut is made of stainless steel, coated